

PATENT**REMARKS**

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in this application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,625,490 to McClure et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.


As conceded by the Examiner, McClure et al. only qualifies as prior art to the subject matter claimed in the present application, if at all, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Applicants further submit that McClure et al. was filed after November 29, 1999 and is assigned to a common assignee as the present application. Therefore, under 35 U.S.C §103(c), McClure et al. can not be used as a prior art reference to support a rejection of the pending claims under 35 U.S.C §103(a). Applicants therefore respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

In light of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice of allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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